

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Richard Ellis on October 2, 2008.

The application has been amended as follows: Claim 11 depends on – claim 7 – instead of canceled "claim 10".

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1, 4, 6-8, 11, 14, 15, 21-33, 35 and 44-49 allowed.

The closest relevant arts are Riedy et al (5,108,474) and Schultheiss et al (2003/0000389 A1).

Riedy et al discloses a composite filter material for removal of particles from a fluid stream (col. 1, lines 5-14) comprising a membrane filtration layer comprising a porous polymeric membrane (13, col. 5, lines 13-57), at least one depth filtration media layer comprising fibers (11, col. 3, line 45 through col. 4, line 5) disposed on the upstream side of the membrane filtration member (13) wherein the membrane filtration layer comprising ePTFE (col. 5, lines 48-50). The composite filter media further comprising a support layer disposed on the downstream side of the membrane filtration layer (col. 5, lines 58-61) wherein the support layer is laminated to the membrane filtration layer (col. 6, lines 26-34). Riedy et al also disclose the membrane filtration layer and the depth filtration media layers can be pleated (see col. 10, lines 46-67-).

Riedy et al further disclose a composite filter comprising a frame (41), a composite filter media (11-13) wherein the composite filter material is sealed in the frame with a potting material wherein the potting material is selected from the group of silicone, polyurethane, plastisol or the like (col. 6, lines 26-34). Riedy et al also disclose various air permeability ratings via tests and layer thickness of the composite filter material (see the whole document). It is inherently understood that with this configuration the composite filter media has a certain degree of dust capacity.

Schultheiss et al disclose a multi-layered air filter wherein the filter media comprising electrostatic charge (page 1, paragraph 0014 and 0015).

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-8, 10, 11, 14, 15, 21-33, 35 and 44-49 of this instant patent application differ from the disclosure of either Riedy and Schultheiss et al in that the meltblown filtration media layer has fibers of less than 5 microns, the fibers have an electrostatic charge, and the meltblown media is disposed directly on the upstream side of a membrane filtration layer.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MINH-CHAU T. PHAM whose telephone number is (571)272-1163. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon/Tues/Thur/Fri 7:00 am - 5:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Duane Smith can be reached on (571) 272-1166. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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